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SUBJECT: Liu Yubu Named New Shenzhen Party Secretary

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¶1. (SBU) Former Guangdong Deputy Party Secretary Liu Yubu was appointed Shenzhen Party Secretary January 2, according to official news reports. Though the assignment is not a promotion for Liu -- both positions carry equivalent rank -- his installation as a long-time colleague of Hu Jintao in a position held in recent years by those sympathetic to Jiang Zemin could signal Hu's expanding political influence here in south China.

¶2. (SBU) Unless Liu makes the jump to Politburo member in the next few years, regulations requiring retirement from Party leadership at age 65 will make the Shenzhen assignment his last. A local journalist who follows south-China politics told us he was surprised by Liu's appointment, noting that Liu's previous work has all been at the provincial or national level -- he has never before been responsible for an entire municipality.

Biographic Data

¶3. (U) Liu Yubu was born in August 1949 in Tai'an, Shandong Province, and joined the Communist Party in 1971. After studying electric metallurgy at the Steel Metallurgical Department of the Northeast Industrial Institute 1973-1976, he worked as a technician (1976-1977) and as an assistant engineer (1977-1982) at the Ministry of Metallurgy. During the latter period, Liu also served as Secretary of the ministry's Communist Youth League (CYL) Committee.

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¶4. (U) Liu's political rise began with his selection as a member of the Standing Committee of the Communist Youth League Central Committee and as the Secretary of the Central Agencies Committee of the Central Communist Youth League from 1982 to 1986. During this period Liu developed a relationship with Hu Jintao, who also served on the CYL Central Committee. After a brief stint at the Central Party School (August 1985-January 1986), Liu worked first as a member, then as director of the Office of the Central Agencies Work Committee (1986-1995).

¶5. (U) From 1995 to 2000, Liu served in government and Party positions in Shaanxi Province, including as Vice Governor, Director-General of the Provincial Planning Commission, and member of the Shaanxi Communist Party Standing Committee. He was then transferred to Guangdong Province, where he was a member of the provincial Standing Committee and Director-General of the Organizational Department of the provincial Party committee

(2000-2004). From 2004 to 2008 Liu served as the Guangdong Party Committee's Deputy Party Secretary and as President of the Guangdong Party School, where he was also Secretary of Politics and Laws.

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